A

# SERMON

Preached at the

## Primary Visitation

OF HIS GRACE

# FRANCIS

Lord Arch-Bishop of *Dublin.*

BY

*S. FOLEY*, A.M. Fellow of *Trinity Colledge* near *Dublin*: and Chaplain to His Grace.

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*LONDON*:

Printed for *Moses Pitt*, at the Angel in *St. Paul's* Church-Yard. 1683.

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TO THE

*Most Reverend Father in God,*

# FRANCIS,

Lord Arch-Bishop of *Dublin*,

*PRIMATE & METROPOLITAN*

OF

# IRELAND.

May it please Your Grace,

I *Most humbly present to Your Grace the Sermon which I made to Your Clergy, at Your Graces Primary Visitation. That whilst we complain of being despised, we may*

*not make our selves justly contemptible, I deliver'd my Thoughts with Freedome, in reference to our Lives, and our Doctrines. There are many Learned and Worthy Persons of the Clergy within Your Graces Inviſdiction, and Your Graces Example and Authority, Your Learning and Prudence, adorned with so much ſweetneſs of Temper and Zeal for the* Church, *and those many other excellent Qualifications which have render'd* Prelates *Glorious and Venerable, in the worſt of Times, and for which Your Grace is Belov'd and Honour'd by all that know you, will make more ſuch. And therefore these Reflections on the ill Conſequences of wicked Lives, and ridiculous, uſeleſs or miſchievous Sermons, will appear to judicious Persons, not a Satyr on, but a Vindi-*

*cation*

*cation of Your Graces Clergy, inaſmuch as 'twill remind them that Your Clergy neither Live, nor Preach ſo.*

I am my Lord,

Your Graces moſt Dutiful

and Obedient Chaplain

and Servant,

SAMUEL FOLEY.

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I am my Lord,

Your Graces most Dutiful

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and Servant,

SAMUEL FOLEY.

A Visitation

# SERMON

PREACHED

In the Cathedral Church of St. *Patrick*.

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1 *Timothy*, iv. 16.

*Take heed unto thy Self, and to thy Doctrine: Continue in them: for in doing this Thou shalt save thy Self, and them that hear thee.*

ALthough this Advice was immediately directed by St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, who was then *Bishop* of *Ephesus*; yet since there is nothing in it which particulary concerned him as in that Eminency, and is not of equal Obligation to the inferiour Clergy: I did judge it not improper for the Subject of my Discourse upon this Occasion. I know not better how to inlarge

inlarge upon it, than by laying before you the neceſſity of our complying with it, that ſo we may be ſo happy as to obtain what was propoſed to *Timothy* for his Encouragement, be ſaved our ſelves, and aſſiſt others in their way to Heaven.

Concerning the words we may obſerve that Ἔπεχε, which we Tranſlate *Take heed*, is (as the Learned *Grotius* obſerves out of *Euſtathius*) ſometimes uſed for προσεχε, *intende animum*, give your mind to ſuch a thing, as we uſe to ſay. In which ſenſe the Son of *Syrach* uſed it, *Eccl.* xxxiv. 2. *He who regardeth Dreams*, ἐπέχων ἐνυπνίοις, *is like him that catcheth at a ſhadow.* The vulgar *Latin* renders it, *Qui attendit ad viſa.* In the Text *Beza* tranſlates it *Attende*, *Eraſmus*, *Cave*; and *Grotius*, *Attende animum tibi ipſi & doctrinæ*, which he farther Paraphraſes, *quomodo vivas & quid doceas.*

But there is a paſſage in *Plutarch's* Life of *Numa Pompilius*, which may give farther light to the uſe and ſignication of the word. He there tells us that before any Pomp or Solemn Supplication, the Κήρυκες went about the City and gave Notice to the People to prepare themſelves. For (ſays he) as the followers of *Pythagoras* would not allow that any ſhould Worſhip and Supplicate the Gods ἐκ παρέργου by

the

the by, and as they happen to come where others are doing so, but obliged all οἴκνθεν εὐθὺς ἐπὶ τοῦτο γνώμῃ παρασκευαζομένους Βαδίζειν to think of it at home, and to put their minds in a devout frame, before they went out of their Houses: So *Numa* thought it very indecent that his Subjects should go and partake of, and celebrate Divine Rites, ἐν παρέργῳ καὶ ἀμελῶς, as a Matter of no great concern, carelesly and indifferently, but when they design'd to engage themselves in those matters, he would have them lay aside all other thoughts and cares; and therefore before they began their Sacrifices, this Proclamation was made, *Hoc Age*, think what you are about, compose your mind for it, and let it be your whole business. Now doing thus, being most intent and setting ones whole mind upon Religious Offices, *Plutarch* expresses by προσέχειν διάνοιαν. From which Emphatical Use of the word, we may without any violence to the Text infer that St. *Paul* would not have *Timothy* do this as a light and indifferent thing; but to look upon it as his main work and employment, that which required his whole thoughts and study, which is confirm'd by the next words, *Continue in them.* Ἐπίμενε αὐτοῖς. *Grotius* indeed Translates it, *Stay there at* Ephesus, and shews where ἐπιμένειν has that signification more than once. But *Beza* with

greater probability, *Parmane in istis*, the vulgar reads, *Insta in illis*, The Translation of the *Syriack* Version is *Perdura in his*, and of the *Arabick*, *Assiduus & constans esto in doctrinis*: and this agrees with the preceding Verse, *Meditate upon these things, give thy self wholly unto them.*

The next words declare the blessed effects of so doing, *In doing this thou shalt both save thy self and them that her thee.* Tho' this properly belongs to God and to our Saviour, who alone are able to save: yet we find the Salvation of men after a subordinate way sometimes attributed in the Scriptures to those who are intrusted with the *Ministry of Reconciliation.* St. *Paul* says, *If by any means I might provoke to Emulation them who are of my flesh, and might save some of them.* Rom. xi. 14. and the Angel told *Zacharias*, that his Son *should turn many of the Children of* Israel *to the Lord their God.*

Having said thus much concerning the meaning of these words, I shall observe this method in speaking to them.

*First*, I shall represent to you the great necessity of *taking heed to our selves.*

*Secondly, Of taking heed to our Doctrines.*

*Thirdly*, What Encouragement we have to do so.

*Fourthly*, I shall propose what I conceive it may

may be for our advantage, to be more particularly careful of in our present Circumstances.

I begin with the first point. The great necessity of *taking heed to our selves*: that is, That our Lives be holy and vertuous, and our Behaviour innocent and blameless. This is a large subject, and much might be said upon it; But I shall confine what I have to propose, to two heads, the one drawn from our selves absolutely consider'd; the other with relation to those who are under our Charge: from a due consideration of which will result these two inferences.

1. That we are particularly obliged to a greater proportion of Piety and Vertue then other men, if we consider the many advantages we enjoy towards it. 2. If we consider the ill Effect our bad Lives will have upon others.

1. I say, if we consider the advantages we enjoy above other men towards Piety and Vertue. To hint a little at them. If we look abroad into the World we shall find, that nothing so much occasions mens Wickedness and Irreligion, as their not considering Religion and Vertue as they ought. They are so taken up with their wordly business, and their minds so imployed in gratifying their passions, and pleasing their fancies, in getting of Estates, or in spending of them, in noise and hurry, in gallantry or downright labour

and toyl, that they have not leasure to think much of spiritual, abstracted, and sometimes not very agreeable matters. Whereas Our great business and employment is, to meditate on these things, to consider how we may best represent them to men, so as they may think it worth their pains to deny themselves a little, and to be Religious; to lay before them the Rules of a good Life, and to instruct them in the ways of conquering their evil Inclinations, and subduing their spiritual Enemies. Now from all this we may most justly infer, that we cannot have that Plea of ignorance for our miscarriages, to which others may pretend, and that our Sins being against clearer light, and with more deliberation, shall be interpreted to have a greater degree of Malice in them. We cannot but think that God who has given us much, will require the more from us, and not be pleased with those imperfect Essays of Virtue, which may be accepted in other men, allowances being made for their infirmities; and indeed under the Law, we find no Attonement appointed to be made for *Sins of Ignorance* in a Priest. Besides this, we are by our very Profession out of the Road of many Sins, and not Assaulted by many Temptations, to which other men are exposed; and consequently are more at liberty to be upon our Guard

Guard in those other instances, wherein we are obnoxious. And lastly, we are more eminently spiritual, we have the good gifts of God, and the *Anointing* which is *from above*; 'tis by us that God would plant holiness among men, by us he designs to Erect his Throne, and to Establish his Dominion in their hearts. Well therefore may He expect, that we be holy, that we Obey those Laws, and Submit to that Government.

2. This will farther appear, if we consider our selves with respect to those who are under our Charge, and that upon two accounts. *First*, The lamentable influence which our bad Examples will have upon them. *Secondly*, Our wickedness will render our Labours unsuccessful, and useless.

1. We may consider the ill influence which our Examples will have upon them. For besides that general Inclination which is in most men, to imitate others in what they see them do, there is something very particular in this Case. When People take Notice, that one who hath the Repute of a Learned Considering Person, who declaims Eloquently against Vice, and speaks great things of Holiness and Piety; does behave himself after the rate of ordinary wicked men; when they discern that he is loose and extravagant, unjust in his dealings, or uncharitable; are they

they not too apt to argue thus in their minds? *This man certainly knows the worst that will follow all these things; he can tell we are sure, all that can be said for Religion, and against Wickedness; he has had more time and opportunities of studying them to the bottom than we; and doubtless he would never do thus, did he not discover something that we are not aware of, were he not convinced that all Religion is but a mear Cheat, and a sort of Engin to keep the World in Order. 'Tis true, he does Teach us other things, but then 'tis his Trade to do so, he Lives by it, and must not be so imprudent and false to himself, as to lay open the Imposture by which he has his Wealth. He has often told us of Heaven and of Hell, but we know that if there be such places, or states, of Happiness and Misery, he must be in the one or in the other, as well as we; and surely, he would not be so unconcern'd for himself, did he not find, that 'tis really much easier, at least, to arrive at the one, and to escape the other, than we are tamely perswaded.* Now what do we think will be the issue? will not this be a more certain Rule to men than our Sermons, and will they not think that they do enough for themselves, if they make as sure of Heaven as their Minister do's, and will an ordinary Person think himself bound to keep his Conscience under more difficult restraints than

his

his Teacher? And I wish 'twere not too common a principle among some People, that they shall not Answer for what Sins they commit in the Company of a Clergy-man, and that none had cause to suspect that we do, as some of the Fathers tell us, of the *Epicureans*, (*Clem. Alexandr. Strom.* lib. 5.) That they had, *quædam apud se arcana, neque se permittere omnibus*, some Mysteries which were not to be communicated to all men; and that they made to one another private allowances of being wicked, whilst to the world their Principles carry'd a great shew of Gravity, and Severity.

2. Our Viciousness will defeat all our Studies, and make useless our most elaborate Exhortations to Piety. *Aristotle* (in which he is followed by many) in his most excellent Books of Rhetoric, among Arguments fit to perswade, he places that as the first, which consists ἐν τῷ ἤθει τῷ λέγοντι, in the manners of him that speaks; adding this for a reason, that Vertue gives a Man Credit, and procures Reputation to what he shall say, κυριωτάτην ἔχει πίστιν τὸ ἦθος. Men may refuse to believe what we talk, but they are as it were forced to believe what we do. And indeed if they think or see, that we take no great care to Practise what we Teach them to be necessary, they will conclude, that we are not perfectly

perfectly convinced of the Truth of what we say. *'Tis something which we deliver of course, Sermons we must make, and Religion we must talk of, but they have no great reason to think themselves bound to believe us, when they have grounds to suspect that we do not believe our selves.* And therefore as they see us do, they will be as Religious as the Laws and Custom do make them, and is convenient for them, and we shall never perswade them to more. How can we expect that men will with any patience hear us thunder out of the Pulpit, Hell and Damnation against those Sins, which we unconcernedly practise? that they will endure to be chid and upbraided by us, for what we allow in our selves? will not this raise indignation in any one? and may not they say to us, as God does to the Wicked. *Psal.* 50. 16. *What have ye to do to declare Gods Statutes, why do ye preach his Laws, and take his Covenant in your mouths, whereas ye your selves hate to be reformed, and cast his words behind you?* And will they not despise, and scorn to be guided by such Hypocrites, who *make a shew of Godliness*, and preach earnestly for it, and pretend to be very zealous for the glory of God, and the honour of Religion, and yet are the greatest dishonour to God, and the greatest mischief and most shameful disgrace to Religion

Religion of any upon Earth? I might confirm all this by instances out of History, how that when wickedness has begun in the *House of God*, a general deprevation of manners has followed upon it; that wicked Clergy-men have by their evil deeds propagated Impiety, preached men into Atheism, and in fine, destroyed Religion, and ruined their Countrey. Thus it hapned, and thus it may happen again. *Gildas* tells us, that the *Britains* were prepared to be ruin'd by the *Saxons*, by their most ungodly and abominable Lives: which among the People was principally occasioned by the wicked Examples, by the Covetuousness, Luxury and Intemperance, Symony, Pride and Ambition of the Clergy. And about the middle of the *Ninth Century*, the *Northumbrian* Kingdom in *England*, was utterly destroyed by the *Danes*, and its Towns depopulated, its Churches and Monasteries demolished; the Causes of which ruin and desolation, *Alcuin*, a Learned Monk of those Times, attributes to the general Corruption of Men, chiefly occasioned by the Vanity, Lewdness and Debauchery of their Priests. And *William* of *Malmsbury* says much the same, in reference to the *Norman* Conquest. Thus much to shew, how far we are concern'd to *take heed to our selves*. So I come in the Second place, to shew what

we are obliged to do, in reference to our *Doctrines*.

The Commission given us by *Jesus Christ*, is to *make Disciples*, that is, to perswade Men to be good Christians; and the great business of Divinity is to instruct them in the means which God has appointed to be used by them, to bring them to Heaven, and to perswade them to make use of those means; and from hence we must take our measures in what relates to our Doctrine. It must be confessed that the Vanity and Ignorance, and Idleness of some, and the Pride and Curiosity, and Folly of others, have in some Ages, made the Study of Divinity and Preaching clearly unserviceable to those Ends. But in our Times, and among us, by Gods mercy, they are both much reformed. For Religion was not designed to fill mens heads with Notions, to find Employment for our Fancies and Imaginations, and to gratifie Contentious and Ill-humor'd men, with Disputes and Controversies; But we may say of it what *Seneca* do's of Philosophy, in his Sixteenth Epist. *Non est populare artificium, nec ostentationi paratum, non in verbis sed in rebus est, animum format & fabricat, vitam disponit, actiones regit, agenda & omittenda demonstrat.* And to the same purpose, *Tully*, *Non est ostentatio Scientiæ, sed Lex Vitæ.*

We

We may observe that several points which are largely disputed in our Books of *Summes* and *Sentences*, and which take up whole Volumes when they fall into the hands of some *School-men*, such as those concerning the *Incarnation*, and *Hypostatical Union*, the *Nature of Angels*, and many other Heads of elevated and sublime Truths, which are meerly speculative, and have no influence on the mind of the Reader to make him better, are but lightly touch'd at in Holy Scripture. Whereas those matters which immediately tend to Practice, and which some by way of Scorn, term *Moral Doctrines*, are fully and frequently insisted on. We may farther observe that when the Apostles do treat of the Doctrines of Faith, they do make a close connexion of them with the Precepts of Holiness, which may thence be inferr'd; that to *know God*, in the Sacred Dialect, is to honour and to worship him; that St. *Paul*, 1 *Tit.* i. calls the Doctrine of Christianity, *the Acknowledgment of the Truth which is after Godliness*, and the great *Arcana* of our Religion, *Cap.* iii. *v.* 16. of this Epistle to *Timothy*, he styles, *The Mystery of Godliness*. From all which we may be informed, That we ought not to separate our Doctrines from the Rules of Living well, so as to be contented with meer Notions; and that we ought chiefly to

insist on those which tend to reform mens manners. And this by the way, may serve for a Reproof to some Persons. For whereas there are two things in which every Christian should be instructed, the one to acquiesce chearfully and thankfully in the Grace and Mercy of God, the other to *work out their own Salvation with fear and trembling*; and they find that for the former part many have a peculiar kindness, and that 'tis likewise more grateful to their Audience to talk of speculative and pleasing Truths, than to deliver them Rules for their Consciences, which may give them trouble for their past neglect, and in their future observance; They do very often and very largely insist on them, and treat of these only by the by, and now and then, which indeed is the right way, if their great design be to please the People; and they matter not what becomes of their Souls.

But I shall be a little more particular, and in a few words endeavour to lay before you, what we are now principally concerned to beware of in our Doctrines. For though we are clearly deliver'd from the *Old Legends* and *Fables of Saints*, which in former days were a great part of their Sermons, and which either Canoniz'd wicked men, or told such sorry Stories of those who were really good, as might make any one think

think meanly of them; though we have no Sales of modern Miracles, as false as pernicious, and which might serve instead of confirming, to destroy our Faith, and make us doubt of those real ones which support it; though it be not now in fashion among us, to make Arbitrary Applications of Old Prophesies to the present Times, nor (I hope) to traduce our Superiours, and to hint at their supposed Miscarriages, to please the Vulgar; nor many other well-known and detestable ways, which 'tis needless to mention: yet 'twill not, I presume, be thought altogether needless, that we be reminded of three things:

1. That we beware of Preaching any Doctrines which may have an ill influence on mens Lives.

2. Of the Affectation of Learning.

3. Of Wit.

1. That we beware of Doctrines which may have a bad influence on Mens Lives. Such there are plentifully in Books, and such in great vogue with some men. I can but mention a few, some of them relate to the Nature of God, and are most dishonourable to him; such as represent him to be Cruel and Merciless, and Tyrannical, one that delights in our Misery, and rejoyceth in our Destruction. Fit to make men desperate,

or

or Superstitous. Others relate to his Grace, his Councils and Decrees, which make way for their concluding, That 'tis impossible for them to be Saved, or impossible for them to be Damned, the one will make them again desperate, the other negligent, and presumptuous. Others concern Christ's Satisfaction, and the imputation of his Merits, and our Justification; some about Original Sin, and others about Free-will. These and such like, do too often take that hold upon Men, that they are afterwards immoveable to all our Perswasions to Repentance, and Amendment of Life: And certainly Woe will be to us, if we who are employed to Conduct men to Heaven, do put them in the way which leads to Hell.

2. We must beware in our Sermons of an Affectation of being Learned. When we come into these Sacred Places to serve in our Functions, we come to Preach Christianity, and not our selves; we come to tell men how they must Live, not what we have Studied. One of us may indeed go into a Pulpit and confound the People with words of strange and uncouth Languages, and frighten them with long and ill-sounding Names of Authors, which it may be he has read, it may be he has only heard of; he may tell them Stories out of the Old Philo-

sophers,

sophers, and later School-men, at which they may stare and admire. And because the matters which are most necessary for our Salvation, are plain and easie to be understood, he may slight them as vulgar things, and choose only those Nice, Difficult Points, which may best serve for Dispute and Contention, for Noise and Ostentation. He may Argue on both sides, make many knots, untie some, cut in sunder the rest, bestow unkind Titles on some of his Adversaries, and more innocent Railery on others, and with many subtile Distinctions and blustering Terms of Art, he may at last settle the business to his own content. But after all this, the most Attentive and Patient of his Hearers, may go from Church little wiser than they came thither.

The common People 'tis likely, will cry him up for a prodigious Scholar, and one of most profound Learning; but persons of moderate understanding will only conclude, that such a one has not shewn much Judgment, nor yet Learning, but that truly he has given Testimony abundantly sufficient to convince them, that he has either Read or had recourse to, a multitude of, perhaps useless, Books; or else has met with some Book, whose Author had done so. And this is all the Reputation, which for the most part, a man shall gain by such a per-

performance; And though he flatter himself up with ever so vain Conceits that he shall be thought a great Scholar for it, and find himself not clearly disappointed: Yet, I presume, 'twould humble him, if he did but know that many of them who esteem'd him a great Scholar, did upon the same Account pity him, because they did also believe, that he had studied away most of his Senses. In a word, he may make himself ill thought of, and do's much Abuse his Hearers Patience, and his own Function, who makes it his Business to talk this way, and he shews Learning enough, and indeed must be Learned above the ordinary rate, who knows how upon every useful subject, to speak sober, strong, plain and useful Sence.

3. The *Third* thing I told you, we are concerned to beware of in our Doctrines, is an Affectation of being *Witty*.

This is a fault not constantly the same, but changes with the Humor of the Age. For though true Sense and real Wit, be always and in all Languages the same, yet something there is which tickleth the Peoples Fancies, and which they call Wit, that hath as much Variety, and as many Successions in it, as the fashions of Cloaths have.

Now it may be truly affirmed, that sometimes a good

a good Sermon is spoiled, and a Preacher made ridiculous, by awckwardly and ungainly aiming at this. All men cannot command it, and they who do it forcedly, and clumsily, and unnaturally, must fall in danger of the Censure of much Vanity and Indiscretion. But if to fail now and then in such an Attempt be prejudicial to the main Design, what shall we think when a whole Sermon is nothing but a Collection of fine Thoughts, and gay Expressions, and of all those vices of Speech, which 'tis the work of Rhetorick to instruct men, not how to practise, but how to avoid? When a Preacher takes a great and weighty subject of Religion and Morality, and gives 'em upon it store of flanting Metaphors, and studied Flourishes, and instead of grave and solid Motives to Piety and Vertue, only little Conceits upon some Texts of Scripture, and an indigested *farrago* of pretty choice Fancies, which might, perhaps, become an Exercise of a Youth, on a matter suitable. And then, for grave men to value themselves upon being wonderfully indiscreet, and upon using such tricks in their Pulpits, and in delivering a Message from their great Creatour to the People, as they would blush at, and which would be accounted Non-sense, or intolerable, in their ordinary Conversation, among their Neighbours and Acquaintance.

In brief, to lay before men their duties, and to perswade them to practise what they are convinced is so, is our work in Preaching, and whatsoever we offer which is inconsistent with, or prejudicial to it, is sinful; whatever is not some way preparatory or useful thereto, is impertinent. And let us beware that out of a vain humour, we do not give the Congregation too much occasion to think, that we come with no great design to do them good, when we entertain them with nice Speculations, sublime Controversies, useless Notions, or Childish despicable Trifles.

I suppose 'tis not necessary that I add, that we have not done all which St. *Paul's* Exhortation about our Doctrines requires, when we have Preached our Sermons in the Church; but that we must also labour in private to give, those who are under our Charge, true Notions of things, reprove the Vicious, and reconcile the Unfriendly, and instruct the Rude and Ignorant in the first Principles of Religion, after a more familiar way. And therefore I shall only, before I pass from this Head, shew you the close connexion and dependance which this part of the Text hath on the former, and that we may *take heed to our Doctrines*, how necessary it is, that we first *take heed to our selves*, and that upon an account not yet mention'd.

It

It was the Opinion of *Tully*, the Wisest and most Eloquent Man that we hear of among the *Romans*; and *Quintilian* makes it the Title of one of his *Chapters*, in his most judicious Work; *That he cannot be a good Orator, who is not a good Man.* And may not we improve it a little farther, that much less can he be a good Preacher: he who has not purged his mind from those passions and appetites, which make men foolish and perverse, and unhappy. The Spirit of God will not dwell in an impure Soul, and where there is not solid Piety; and such shall not know spiritual things. There are some parts of our Religion (and it may be affirm'd without any suspition of Enthusiasm) the knowledge of which is to be obtain'd, not so much by Labour and Industry, as by having a Pious Mind, and real Sense of Religion upon ones heart; and the greater progress men make in Piety, the more Learned they shall be in them.

Farther; We know, a kind of *Natural Enthusiasm* is required in *Poets*, which they term a *Spirit of Poetry*; and in *Oratory*, the Great Masters of it speak of an *instinct*, and *happy impulse of Nature*; and this, in Divine Eloquence, is *Real Devotion.* And the Answer of a Learned Man was not amiss, who being desired to instruct one how he might become an excellent Christian Orator, replied, *Maximè ames Christum.* For how shall he inflame

others with the Love of God, who has not God in all Thoughts? 'Twill be in vain to counterfeit *Devotion* where 'tis not. *Nemo potest personam diu ferre.* He will soon betray himself, his Cheat will be discovered, and his Hypocrisie detested. But he, who is real and substantial, and undesigning in it, will Affect the Hearers minds with the same Piety and Devotion, with which he speaks.

3. The *Third* thing to be considered in the Text, was the *Encouragement* we have thus *to take heed to our selves, and to our Doctrines.*

Time will not allow that I say much on it; and therefore I shall only put you in mind, that besides what St. *Paul* Assures us, and besides that inward Joy, and unexpressible Satisfaction, which a man of a Generous and Worthy Spirit, must needs have in himself, when he finds that he do's some good in the World, and promotes the common happiness of mankind; We have our Saviour's own word, that *though there had not* before that, *risen a greater than* John *the Baptist, among them that were born of Women, yet he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven, is greater than he.* Mat. xi. 11. And that, *Whosoever shall do his Commandments and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.* Mat. v. 19. And if they whom we Labour to instruct, happen to be be ever so perverse and untractable, yet

if,

if we do our parts diligently and honestly, we may take up the Prophet's Consolation. *Tho' I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought and in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work is with my God.* Isaiah, xlix. 4.. And may apply to our selves what God told *Ezekiel. If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, He shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast deliver'd thy Soul.* Ezek. iii. 19.

And this is all I thought necessary to say upon the Text.

I hope, it is not expected by any, that by way of Application, I do now reckon up all the Vices, of which a Clergy-man may be guilty; much less that in (Complement to the Malicious Curiosity of any Lay-persons, who come most readily to hear *Visitation Sermons* perhaps, that they may have out of the mouth of one of their own Coat, somewhat to Asperse their Ministers with) that I insinuate You, or many of You, to be guilty of them all. I hope there are no such persons among this Audience, neither such as desire to hear, nor many that deserve to be told of, their Faults. It has been my part to set before You Your Duties, and no question but They who are Your Superiours, will upon due Information, Censure those who Violate them. And I may,

without

without the least degree of Flattery, affirm, that our present Clergy, though some Uncharitable Persons would represent them as Profane, and Dissolute and Ignorant, and scruple not to defame an whole Order, upon the imprudencies and miscarriages, real or imaginary, of a few, and the Stories of some talkative People, is notwithstanding compos'd of men of as known Sobriety, and inoffensive Conversations, as eminent for true and useful Learning, as painful and laborious, and in a word, who have as many of the Ornaments of good Christians, and of good Clergy-Men, as any the Church of God has enjoyed for several Ages. And I make no question, but that I may reckon this Assembly, an unanswerable and living Argument, of the Truth of what I say.

However, having already represented to you in general, that those Vertues which no Christian can be without, and those which adorn our Profession, should be in a higher and more excellent degree in us; I shall (intreating your favourable interpretation) conclude my discourse with some honest, and I hope, seasonable Suggestions; which may hint at the necessity of some particular Christian duties, with respect to our present Circumstances.

And the First I shall recommend is Courage, Resolu-

Resolution and Constancy: A Vertue, without which none can be a good man. For he that is of a dastardly, timerous Spirit, may be terrifyed into Impiety, frightned out of his Conscience, and hector'd out of his Religion. We are surrounded with multitudes of Enemies, and violent opposition is made againſt us: But let us Encourage our selves in the Heavenly Assistance promised by our Saviour, *Hold fast the Faith and a good Conscience*, and Persevere in the performance of our Duty, reckoning that *more are for us*, than They *who are against us*.

To move us hereto, I shall at present use only one Argument, and that shall be drawn from a Consideration of our most powerful Adversaries: And we may rank them thus. They are such as do hate and oppose, and revile us, either *First*, Because they hate all Religion, and cannot endure to be under such Restraints as, we say, it lays upon them. Or, *Secondly*, Because we have Renounced all Usurp'd and Foreign Jurisdiction, and will not Traiterously Submit to the *Bishop*, and bring in again all the Abuses and Innovations of the *Church*, of *Rome*. Or else *Thirdly*, Because we are for Decency and Order in our Publick Worship, and do observe our selves, and teach others to observe, the prudent Injunctions of our Lawful Superiours.

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But *First*, Shall we be Afraid to own that there is a God, because some desperate profligate Wretches, wish there were none? Shall we be backward to perswade Them to the Belief of, what all Wise and Serious Men, have in all Ages most firmly Believed; because some rash, unthinking People, useless in the World, and of no great Judgment, say, or would be glad 'twere not True. Shall we be discouraged from inciting Men to Vertue, upon certain hopes of endless Happiness hereafter, because some who have forfeited all Title and Pretence to it, do not love to hear of it? Or, Leave off reminding those of Hell and Damnation, who go on in their Wickedness, because that Discourse is not very agreeable? No certainly; Let us not be Asham'd to own our Maker, and what Work we are sent about, because we Live in an Atheistical and Abominable Generation. And let us not be concern'd, if, because we do Conscientiously discharge our Duties, and would perswade Men to be better; They do declare us Troublesome, for our Charity, and do slight and undervalue us, because we are Christ's Messengers to them, to envite them to be happy.

*Secondly*, Shall we be Afraid or Asham'd to be True to our God, and to our Prince? Shall we renounce our Consciences and our Loyalty, to

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please and gratifie Men, whom their Education, and other Prejudices, their Designs and Interest have ingaged in defence of a most unreasonable and unjust Religion? Shall we be terrified by the vain noise and impotent ostentation of Infallibility, which they say, they have among them; but have not yet agreed, and are never likely to agree, where it is? Shall we renounce our very Senses, and be afraid to speak against that most prodigious and monstrous Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, least we should offend? Or shall we suffer their Emissaries to delude, and wheedle the poor People into a most dangerous profession, to the great hazard of their Salvation, without the least Contradiction? And shall we faintly resist, or foolishly submit to a Yoke, which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear?

But tho' we must be Zealous and Resolute in this point, and in maintaining as far as belongs to our stations, That Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free; yet let us beware that we do it soberly, and with discretion. For we know, by too sad experience, that an ill-advised and unwary Zeal against Popery, is one of the most serviceable Instruments it has, and let us not be scar'd out of our Christian Moderation and Sobriety, by the furious Clamours of those rash and violent People, who traduce the chief Strength

of the *Protestant Church*, for *Papists*, or secret Friends of them?

*Thirdly*, Shall we disobey our Superiours, violate the Order of the best Constituted Church in the World, and turn all into Confusion, to gratifie an unhappy and giddy Generation of Men, of infinite Opinions, and Divisions, and Sub-divisions, and who Agree in nothing but in their unreasonable Out-cries against our poor despised Church? It must be allow'd that many of the Non-conforming Party, are well-meaning Men, and to be pitied, and dealt withal with meekness and gentleness, and all with Christian Charity. But it do's not hence follow, that we must allow them to do what they please. It do's not follow, that we must be Afraid to defend the Doctrines and Principles of our Church. 'Tis too evident, that even of those well-meaning People, many are either of weak understandings, or under great prejudices of unpracticable Notions, and dividing and disorderly Principles; and by their Crafty or Deluded, their Necessitous and Seditious, or their Honest and Mistaken Leaders, inraged against us, without any Provocation given on our side, unless it be that they are not uppermost, or that we will not put out our Eyes, and be willing to be led by them. I desire not to disparage any Man, or Party, or to suggest any

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ill Opinions of them, farther then their Behaviour leads us to; But I think of late their Teachers have given no great demonſtrations of much Learning, or of much Diſcretion. For thoſe of them who pretend to be Scholars, have theſe laſt two or three Years, (ſince the Deſigns of *Rome* were ſuppoſed to be diſcovered) employed their Time in publiſhing moſt ſcurrilous Pamphlets, and all the little Stories they could meet with againſt the Eſtabliſh'd Clergy. I appeal to any one who has uſed to obſerve the Employment of the Preſs, whether this be not true. And muſt we ſuffer our ſelves to be run down with Noiſe and Fury? Shall They ſend out Books in a taking popular way, full of Reproaches and Revilings, and ſhall we not dare offer any thing in our Vindication? And when their Diviſions and Uncharitableneſs are like to do the *Proteſtant Church* the greateſt miſchief in the World, ſhall we not dare ſpeak againſt them? And ſhall a few bold Writers, the bottom of whoſe Learning we are not ignorant of, and who before now, have written enough to ſhew, That they do not know much more than other Men, ſtrike both Clergy and Univerſities, and as many, and more Learned Men than theſe Kingdoms perhaps were ever bleſſed with in one Age, before; into Silence and Amazement? Let us be perſwaded neither to

imitate, nor to fear them. Let us not, under pretence of Zeal against *Popery*, countenance or support a Faction; or out of a Project of an Impossible Union, put People in the head to desire that all Ecclesiastical Laws be taken away, and that they be allowed to do what they please. The Second Duty I conceive at this time to be very necessary, is that of Love and Peace among our selves. *A Kingdom divided against it self*, our Saviour tells us, *cannot stand*. We are all Brethren, and Sons of the same Mother, Let us therefore *Love as Brethren, and be of the same mind*. Let us not Envy one anothers Labours or Success, Let us not detract from one another, and give the World occasion to say, That none do speak so severely and unkindly of Clergy-men, as they do of one another. Let us not, that we may advance our own Reputation, insinuate that such or such of our Brethren, are not very deserving; or debase them that we may exalt our selves. For truly, if upon any account we Rail at and Censure one another, The People will think they may use our Language, and by Authority say as we do. And if there be any among us, who will not endure that others do differ from them in Opinion, and will make their own Sentiments the *Rule of Faith*, they are to be pitied, and desired to reflect on the many

Sects

Sects and Diviſions, which were among the Antient Philoſophers, and later diſputing Chriſtians; on the Common Infirmity of Human Nature, and on their own many frailties: and to remember that 'tis not modeſt to impoſe magiſterially all their own dreams or borrowed fancies, upon others, on pain of being declared Heretical, if they receive them not; or to think that all Men are blind, or unconcerned how matters go, but they. I ſhall add only a ſaying of St. *Auſtin*, *Quid opus eſt ut affirmentur vel negentur, vel definiantur cum diſcrimine, quæ ſine diſcrimine neſciantur?*

The third and laſt thing I ſhall preſume at preſent to recommend, is an Exact Obſervation in our own Practice; of our *Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions.* For if we of the *Clergy* ſhew men the way how to break the Laws of the *Church*, and in the publick Adminiſtration of Divine Service, make our Congregations irregular and diſorderly, if we ſhuffle it over to make way for long *Extempore* Harangues of our own, and make for our *Pariſhes* new Rubricks, and new *Canons*; will not this harden men in their Separation, make our Laws deſpiſed, our Government defamed, our ſelves reproached, the eſtabliſh'd Religion contemn'd, and expoſe the true Sons of the Church, and the Conſcientious Obſervers of its Conſti-

Constitutions, to the scorn and hatred of the People? Let us not therefore for our present quiet, the good will of the vulgar, or for any petty advantage, comply with any unreasonable Humour in neglect of our Duty. We shall but encourage them to desire still more, and more unreasonable Compliances; and we are much mistaken, if we think to do good by concealing any necessary Truths, because unpleasant, and by disobeying the Laws, out of a Principle of Courtship and Compliance.* It cannot yet be forgotten, that for some time before the Late Confusions, many of our Church did give themselves much Liberty in deviating from our Ecclesiastical Constitutions, out of tenderness, and in hopes to gain those Dissenters, who pretended to a little Moderation; and in Contemplation of their future Conformity to some, did dispense with other Laws. But in conclusion, when those nice and tender Consciences, by Gods just Judgment on these sinful Nations, came to have Power in their hands, we know how they used those very men who so much courted them. Experience shews, that no good success is to be expected from yielding, what in truth is not at our disposal, to unreasonable People: especially since we see they avow the same Principles, which Actuated the Men of those Times. At first,

Episcopacy

Episcopacy was only to be regulated and moderated, and its Excrescencies a little reduced, the Lyturgie to be purg'd, and a few Ceremonies left indifferent. But they did not stop here, when the work was in their own hands; Episcopacy and the Lyturgie were totally Abolish'd, and the most sad and miserable distractions introduc'd, that ever these Churches laboured under.

*To Conclude*: Let us do our own duties, be Holy and Innocent in our Lives, Laborious and Industrious in our Cures, Resolute and Unshaken in our Loyalty and our Faith, in perfect Love and Charity with one another, and intirely Conformable to our Legal Constitutions: and then if we do not recover those who are Astray into the Church, yet we shall continue our selves in it; and though we cannot, as we would, rescue them from, yet we shall not conspire with, the *Wolves* and *Foxes*; and let us not betray the most Pure and most Reformed Church in Christendome, to humor and court a perverse stiffnecked Generation, who will not be wrought upon by any Condescentions. Let us be Pious and Regular, of a Sober, Meek, and Affable Conversation, let us discountenance the Hypocrisie of the Age, by a True and Real Devotion, and discredit False and Mistaken Zeal, by True Zeal;

Zeal; Let us perform our publick Offices with just Sense and Reverence, and by our constant Diligence and Industry, supply those defects of Nature or Education, which we are conscious of in our selves. And then we may be assured, that if *we*, thus, *take heed to our selves, and to our Doctrines, we shall*, at least, *save our selves, and* some of *those who hear us.*

THE END.